

NAPPY LOCS TOOL

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CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefits of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Number 60/430,405, filed December 3, 2002.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to devices for the hairstyling industry. This invention is used to form dreadlocks in connection with my publication "Making Dreadlocks Using a Tool- the Nappylocs Approach."

The term dreadlock refers to a group of hairs extending from a braid sized part on the scalp which have entangled and/or matted together. The term dreadlocks refer to a hair style that comprises at least one dreadlock and usually more than one. The size of the dreadlocks *or* locks depends on the number of hairs entangled and/or matted amongst one another. The density of the locks, depends on how tightly the individual hair shafts are packed.

Dreadlocks are created by two general methods. The first method involves no styling, sectioning, or manipulation of the hair. The hair is left to tangle or matt on its own. The resulting hairstyle may yield one large lock or several locks of different size producing a non uniform appearance.

The second method involves sectioning the individual's natural hair and twisting or braiding the sections. These sections are allowed to matt or tangle. This results in locks of uniform size and is referred to as having a groomed appearance.

As the hair grows it becomes loose at the scalp. Individuals using the second method have the options of twisting or looping new growth. Pencils, rug latch hooks, and crochet needles are used to loop the hair due to the lack of availability of dreadlock styling devices. Pencils, rug latch hooks U.S. Pat No. 3,893,603, and crochet needle U.S. Pat No. D420, 214 were not designed to style hair.

Use of the pencil, rug latch hook, and crochet often leads to hair breakage, stray hairs, and frizzy weak locks. These tools also produce uneven loop tension resulting in lumpy locks, damaged dreadlock ends, and hairs painfully pulled from the scalp.

The pencil Fig 5 is used like a spear to shove or stab the lock while looping. The pointed end 16 places unwanted holes in the lock which form weak spots. When individuals use the eraser end 20, the lock hairs are weakened from the constant abrasion. The pencil Fig 5 also has rough metallic encasement 18 and uneven exposed wood 22 which saws the lock strands. Hair looping close to the scalp is difficult resulting in an unfinished appearance.

FIG. 7 the crochet needle U.S. Pat No. D420, 214 does not hold the hair sections while looping allowing the hair to slip out of its hooked end 24. It is also awkward to use as it requires basic knowledge of knitting and/or crochet techniques. The size range limits its ability to loop different sized locks since its intended purpose is to be used with yarn. Close to the scalp looping is difficult to achieve due to the crochet hook's bulky width. This results in hairs pulled out of the scalp.

FIG. 6 rug latch hook U.S. Pat No. 3,893,603 has a latch 26 which grasps the lock and pulls it through the loop from the opposite side. The latch 26 portion of the tool is not a controlled mechanism and relies on gravity in assisting it to close. When one uses this tool, the latch 26 closes prematurely grasping only a portion of the lock hairs. This results in pain to the individual as it shreds and breaks the matted hairs when looping. The hook 28 and latch 26 frequently grasp hairs from adjoining locks resulting in unwanted combined locks and pain. This forms inconsistent loop tension and packs loops too tight. The resulting lock is often lumpy in appearance. The rug latch hook Fig 6 is designed for yarn and is limited in its ability to style the various sizes of dreadlocks.

Accordingly there is a need for a tool designed specifically to style dreadlocks.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF INVENTION

The Nappy Locs Tool comprises a tail which allows for the penetration of hair section, a bulb,

and a pinch which holds hair securely while the hair is looped.

The tail of the tool is smooth, round and thin. This allows easy insertion of the tool without sawing, shredding, and breakage of the lock strands. The tail can also be used to manipulate loop size and placement as it gently pushes the loops into their correct position. This results in a smooth stable lock able to hold its weight throughout its life cycle.

The round smooth pinch holds the lock securely while looping and does not damage the ends or grasp hairs from neighboring locks.

The Nappy Locs Tool smooth thin design allows for looping close to the scalp without pain resulting from pulling out of hair follicles. The device also reduces the appearance of frizzy locks by incorporating stray hairs into the lock. The thin smooth design penetrates dreadlocks easier making its simple hand sewing operation faster to use.

The size variation of the invention accommodates numerous dreadlock sizes. The invention may be used straight, the tail hooked or the entire tool curved in the shape of a semicircle for ease of use.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1A, 1B, 1C are perspective views of the hair sewing needle according to the present

invention.

FIG. 2 is a perspective environmental view of the hair sewing needle illustrating its use with a section of hair.

FIGS. 3A, 3B, 3C are perspective views of an additional embodiment.

FIGS. 4A, 4B, 4C are perspective views of an additional embodiment.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a pencil

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a rug latch hook

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of a crochet needle.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

This Nappy Locs Tool is directed to the hair styling applications of creating and tightening dreadlocks. A preferred embodiment of the hair looping needle is illustrated in FIG. 1A, 1B, 1C perspective views. As best seen in FIG. 1A, the Nappy Locs Tool comprises a smooth round shaft 10 having first and second ends 12 and 14. Each of the ends 12 and 14 define a round tail point 12a and a round tip 14a.

The shaft 10 further comprises a bulb or otherwise hollow expanse 13 located nearest the second end 14.

The pinch 14 is the second end of the needle with an opening that is reduced in width when compared to the bulb. Its terminal end has a rounded tip.

The needle FIG. 1 is constructed using approximately 2 inches of 18 ga sterling round wire. The wire is formed around a 3/8 inch mandrel creating a circle and a tail approximate 1 inch long. The circle is soldered closed. Next the circle end closest to the tail is pinched around a 2/8 inch mandrel creating two openings the bulb and the pinch. The pinch opening is adjusted to approximately 1/8 inch opening.

Operation of Invention

To tighten a dreadlock FIG. 2 thread the hair through the bulb 13. Then gently slide the lock end into the pinch 14. Insert the tail 12 into the new growth. Pierce the base of the lock with the tail at the north point. Slide the tail 12 up to the matted end of the lock. Pull the tail completely through the lock. Continue to loop the lock as described perpendicular to the previous insertion points, until new hair growth is tighten to the scalp.

To start a lock from scratch, slide the hair section into the pinch as described above. Pierce the hair section using the tail as close as possible to the tool. Pull the tool completely through the hair section. Next pierce the hair section at an angle perpendicular or crossing the first piercing. Pull the tool completely through. Complete this cross looping until hair section is completely looped close to the scalp.

FIG 3 and 4 Additional Embodiments

Additional embodiments in Fig 3 and 4 show perspective views. Fig. 3 displays the Nappy Locs Tool with a shaft curved to form a semicircle. Fig. 4 displays the needle with the tail tip 12a flexed at a 90-degree angle. Additional Embodiments in Fig 3 and 4 operate identically to the preferred embodiment.

Conclusions, Ramifications, and Scope

Thus the reader will see the Nappy Locs hair Tool has features specifically designed for sewing the hair style dreadlocks. These features result in ease of use, gentle looping of hair, without unwanted combining of locks, breakage or hair abrasion. The Nappy Locs Tool loops hair without pain and produces a smooth strong uniform lock.

Although the description above contains many specificities, these should not be construed as limiting the scope of the invention but merely as providing illustrations of some of the presently preferred embodiments of this invention. For example this device may be cast or carved out of other materials and metals to comprise one unit with/without the aid of forming and/or bonding. This device can be fashioned in different sizes to accommodate various dreadlock sizes. This device may also be used to attach synthetic braids or dreadlocks to corn rows.